

COLORADO A & M COLLEGE

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Fort Collins, Colorado

Division of
Veterinary Medicine

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Dr. Florence Sabin, Chairman
Governor's Committee on Health
Denver, Colorado

Dear Doctor Sabin:

Since it is evident from an examination of the preliminary draft of the health program which your committee has drawn up it is the intention to place more of the food supervision and inspection under the State Board of Health, may I draw your attention to the part which the veterinary profession might play in the service.

From the very beginning of the federal meat inspection service, veterinarians have not only been in charge, but have carried out nearly all of the detailed work in the yards and packing houses. At the present time more than one thousand members of the profession are engaged in this service. The Dairy Bureau of the Department of Agriculture, while concerned more with education and research than with inspection, has on its staff a number of veterinarians. All of the food inspection service of the army, including milk, meat, fish, poultry, and in fact all food products, is under the supervision of the Veterinary Corps which is an integral part of the Medical Department. At one time the army employed 2300 veterinarians largely for this purpose. The U. S. Public Health Service has recently made provision for the addition of a staff of veterinarians and is now engaged in selecting qualified men for the positions.

While many of the states have meat and dairy inspection located in various departments, such as the department of agriculture, the livestock sanitary board, or the board of health, in most instances the work in these two lines is conducted either directly by veterinarians or with the advice of members of the profession. The food inspection in most of the large cities is conducted in the same way. There, the service is usually in the health department, but there are veterinarians employed who look after the meat and milk.

In Colorado, the following cities have their food inspection directly under the supervision of members of the veterinary profession:

Fort Collins
Loveland
Berthoud
Longmont
Boulder
Greeley
Sterling
Pueblo

Salida
Grand Junction
Fort Morgan
Rifle
Glenwood Springs
Montrose
Alamosa
Monte Vista


It would seem therefore that co-operation with these various agencies and the state service could best be accomplished either by having a veterinarian on the State Board of Health or one employed by that body. Not only would this be advantageous in promoting better relationship with the city food inspection systems, but there are also other areas that are common to the medical and veterinary professions where veterinary knowledge would be of assistance. May I mention particularly the prevalence of brucellosis in the cattle of the state. It is true that the control and eradication of this disease is more particularly under the supervision of the state veterinarian and the local office of the Federal Bureau of Animal Industry, but because of the danger of this disease in the production of undulant fever in man, closer co-operation with the State Public Health Service would be desirable.

The presence of Malta fever in goats, as well as in some human patients, is further evidence of the need of such co-operation. May I call your attention to the finding of the U. S. Bureau of Animal Industry that of some 11,000 goats tested in the state, nine percent were affected with this disease. It is also known that there were some human cases, but I am not aware that any adequate survey of the prevalence of the disease in man has been made. No doubt there is excellent excuse for this condition, since the state health service has been extremely short of funds and therefore unable to get competent assistance. The situation, however, remains serious and badly needs attention.

It is probably unnecessary for me to state that only the veterinary schools offer complete and well rounded instruction in food inspection. Our own department of meat and dairy hygiene is now under the supervision of a man who spent 29 years in the army where that type of service is especially stressed.

There are said to be 36 diseases of lower animals that are transmissible to man. Any complete plan for improving human health in the state should therefore make use of members of a profession especially trained in the inspection of meat and dairy products and competent to understand the relationship of diseases of lower animals to those in man. The veterinary profession of Colorado offers its services to your committee in any way in which you feel that it can be of assistance.

Very truly yours,



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